



Department of Development Services
Planning Division
Meeting Minutes of the
Planning & Zoning Commission
(APPROVED)

REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, March 27, 2012

Commissioners Present

Sandra Bobowski
David Blatt
Temple Shannon
Gerald Pleasent
Edwin Vargas
Valerio Giadone
Tony Koos

Staff Present

Roger J. O'Brien
Kim Holden
Jonathan Mullen
Jeff Cormier
Lynda Crespo

Commissioners Absent

John Lupo, Jr.

The meeting was called to order. The roll call was taken. Chairman Bobowski appointed Commissioner Pleasent to fill a vacant position. There was a quorum.

I. Regular Meeting

a. Consideration of the Maple Avenue Revitalization Group (MARG) NRZ Strategic Plan

Planning Director and Secretary of the Commission Roger O'Brien spoke about the purpose of the NRZ groups in the City. Each neighborhood developed their goals and priorities.

Principal Planner Jon Mullen presented a summary of the MARG Strategic Plan to the Commission. The plan included several accomplished developments and renovations to Trinity Plaza, the Greenberg-Beatman site, the South End Wellness Center and the Campfield Avenue Library Branch. Other project goals included the redevelopment of 56-66 and 76 New Britain Avenue - a special permit application to develop a medical facility at the site was approved recently by the Planning and Zoning Commission, revitalization of the Maple Avenue and Webster Street triangle, streetscape improvements for Maple Avenue – between Preston Street South to the major intersection at Freeman Street South, streetscape improvements for Broad Street –from the intersection of New Britain Avenue to the intersection of Maple Avenue, improvements to Goodwin Park such as a new entrance at the South Street intersection and maintain and repair the fitness trail, and lastly revitalization and development of 26 New Britain Avenue –vacant lot. The MARG Strategic Plan included historical landmarks.

Bill Ericson with MARG was present. Mr. Ericson spoke about neighborhood involvement and public safety concerns in the area of the Webster Theater.

The Commission suggested that MARG and the owners of the Webster Theater get together, to come up with a parking plan to address parking and traffic issues.

On a motion made by Commissioner Vargas, and seconded by Commissioner Giadone, the Commission forwarded a favorable recommendation to the Court of Common Council.

b. Site Plan Review for 5 Constitution Plaza for the renovation of a former hotel into 199 apartments. Applicant & Owner-5PC, LLC, Agent-William Crosskey, Crosskey Architects, LLC.

Commissioner Giadone recused himself.

Principal Planner Jeff Cormier presented a summary of the site plan review for conversion of a former hotel, to a mixed use building. The site was located on the east side of Constitution Plaza. The applicant proposed to renovate the vacant building from a hotel into 199 rental apartment units and two retail units. The façade would be restored to its original look. The northwest side of the building on the plaza level would be expanded to construct residential units. Mr. Cormier reported the existing conditions of the property; the bridge of the building over Kinsley Street had damages due to tall vehicles hitting the façade. Mr. Cormier stated that site lighting was not indicated on the site plan for parking and pedestrian safety. The applicant submitted a parking easement for 220 designated parking spaces for the record. The applicant proposed 10 parking spaces on the south side of the building along the garage driveway. Mr. Cormier reported that the stand alone parking lot on the site did not meet the requirements of the off-street parking regulations. The planning staff recommended approval of the site plan application with the following conditions:

- A parking management plan showing the location of the 200 tenant spaces in the Constitution Plaza garage be submitted
- The parking spaces in the driveway along Columbus Boulevard only be used for valet or pick-up/drop-off purposes
- The 10 parking spaces on the south side of the building along the garage driveway be removed
- All parking in front of the building on Columbus Boulevard is for occupants and tenants of the building only. Rental of spaces to non-occupants is not permitted
- Documentation demonstrating the right to enlarge the building onto public space be submitted
- A site lighting plan be submitted
- The bridge/bottom of building over Kinsley Street be repaired to prevent debris from falling

The applicant was in agreement with the conditions of approval.

The Commission was pleased with the plan and thrilled to bring housing into the downtown area.

A motion to approve the following resolution was made by Commissioner Blatt, and seconded by Commissioner Vargas:

- Whereas, The Planning and Zoning Commission has reviewed the application for a site plan review at 5 Constitution Plaza; and
- Whereas, The proposed use is consistent with the central business district designation from the Plan of Conservation and Development; and
- Whereas, Proposed parking spaces on the south side of the building present safety concerns due to their location adjacent to the driveway and may be removed; and
- Whereas, The applicant has not demonstrated the right to enlarge the building onto public space; and
- Whereas, The parking spaces on site are proposed for tenants and there is no zoning approval on record to rent spaces to off-site establishments; and
- Whereas, The Redevelopment Plan for the Constitution Plaza East Project identifies the site as being a gateway to downtown and recommends improving conditions by removing blight; and
- Whereas, The proposal incorporates significant indoor recreational space for tenants in the form of a fitness area, reception area, lounge, community room and theater room, now be it
- Resolved, That the Planning and Zoning Commission hereby approves the application for special permit as shown in the plans entitled "On the Plaza Luxury Residence" prepared by Crosskey Architects LLC, One Union Place, Hartford, Connecticut, scale of 1"=10' and dated February 16, 2012, for the property located at 5 Constitution Plaza with the following conditions:
1. A parking management plan showing the location of the 200 tenant spaces in the Constitution Plaza garage be submitted.
 2. The parking spaces in the driveway along Columbus Boulevard only be used for valet or pick-up/drop-off purposes.
 3. The 10 spaces on the south side of the building along the garage driveway be removed.
 4. All parking in front of the building on Columbus Boulevard is for occupants and tenants of building only. Rental of spaces to non-occupants is not permitted.
 5. Documentation demonstrating the right to enlarge the building onto public space be submitted.
 6. A site lighting plan be submitted.

7. The bridge/bottom of building over Kinsley Street be repaired to prevent debris from falling.

The following Commissioner voted in favor of the motion: Bobowski, Blatt, Shannon, Vargas, Koos and Pleasant.

The following Commission recused: Giadone.

IV. Adjournment

Respectfully submitted by
Lynda Crespo

Roger J. O'Brien